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STRICTLY PERSONAL: EXCERPTS FROM MY DIARY

April 30 -- Questioned CIA source about nuclear accident in Soviet Union. He said Soviets are pushing nuclear power development; plant managers are under such great pressure to produce that they cut corners; workmanship also below Western standards. Result is that Soviet nuclear program has been plagued with trouble. There have been dozens of plant shut-downs and three major nuclear accidents. Worst occurred in winter of 1957-58 in Ural Mountains. According to one report, nuclear waste exploded in underground shelter close to reactor. Accident contaminated several hundred square miles, forced evacuation of more than 30 towns and villages and poisoned three lakes for next 300 years. Two years ago, I wrote about Soviet nuclear program's "callous disregard of safety procedures." Soviet Embassy wrote me sarcastic letter of denial.